

THE SEMINOLES.

AT HOME.

A VISIT to a Seminole camp reveals many interesting little things which touch the heart and enlist the sympathy of the observer. The affection displayed by the stern-faced father, when coddling his pappoose, convinces the most skeptical that in the barbarian of the forest "the heart of man answers to heart as face to face in water," whatever the skin it beats under.

Where the Seminole is hospitable, is around the camp fire and the "sof-ka" kettle. "Hum-bux-chay" (come eat) is his salutation. The kettle is placed in some convenient part of the camp and at the meal hour the members of the household sit around it. A large sof-ka spoon rests in the pot and is handed from one to another, each taking a single mouthful. A fastidious taste might shrink from using the large spoon, but to affect such taste would be to offend mine host.

Sof-ka is the Seminole standard dish, and is simply a stew made by cooking the meat in a large iron pot, and thickening it with meal, grits or vegetables. Sof-ka corresponds in its importance with the Seminole to "frijoles" among Mexicans. The Indians observe a regularity in meal hours, yet at most any hour the sof-ka kettle is ready for those who may come in from the chase, enhungered. So plentiful is game that it is a common sight to see a saddle of venison or a wild turkey and perhaps a duck roasting before the fire, and, as appetite prompts, any member of the camp may help himself to the savory roast.

The Seminole piccaninnies are healthy, good natured little toddlers, and show no more savage spirit than do their little pale-faced brothers. They play with bows and arrows,